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Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

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Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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III. Information received from the United Nations system

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

1. In the context of monitoring the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[1] the Department of Economic and Social Affairs exchanges information on activities related to the implementation of the Programme of Action with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). This exchange helps keep the organization abreast of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development on issues related to small island developing States. It also helps provide the Commission with current information on the implementation of the Programme of Action in the Caribbean. The Department relies on information from the organization for reporting to the Commission. Since CARICOM is actively involved in sustainable development activities in Caribbean small island developing States, and (jointly with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) is the subregional coordination mechanism for the implementation of the Programme of Action, the information it supplied has been very useful to the Commission on Sustainable Development in its deliberations on sustainable development issues related to Small Island Developing States.

2. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs maintained contacts with CARICOM and, on several occasions, areas of possible cooperation have been explored jointly. The United Nations organized a consultative meeting among regional institutions, in New York in February 1998, which followed up on decisions taken by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session, held to review and appraise the implementation of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The meeting focused on actions that regional institutions, such as CARICOM, could take to promote increased regional implementation of Agenda 21 and helped to identify key regional actions that could further sustainable development objectives.

3. Under the United Nations Trust Fund for New and Renewable Sources of Energy established by the Government of Italy, technical cooperation activities have been carried out to assist small island developing States, including those that are members of CARICOM, to promote the use of solar home systems for lighting and for powering small appliances such as the radios, televisions, cassette recorders, refrigerators and water purifiers, thereby contributing to improving the quality of life of people living in remote locations and reducing their reliance on imported fossil fuels. Projects have been developed for Grenada and Saint Lucia. Training of personnel is also envisaged under this technical cooperation activity.

4. Exchange of information and substantive reports has been continued with CARICOM on the advancement of the status of women, youth matters and the eradication of poverty. The youth focal points of CARICOM and the Organization of American States participated in preparations for the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, held at Lisbon, Portugal, from 8 to 12 August 1998. The United Nations Youth Fund assisted CARICOM preparatory activities and attended the international preparatory meetings for the Conference and the Conference itself. CARICOM was contacted with regard to the possibility of preparing an action-oriented report on poverty eradication in the CARICOM region, but further progress depends on the availability of resources.

5. It is being anticipated that the United Nations project on assistance to public administration systems at the central and local government levels in the Caribbean multi-island States will strengthen the capability of the public administration systems in the English and Dutch-speaking multi-island unitary States of the Caribbean (Netherlands Antilles – Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Saint Eustatius, St. Maarten – and the English-speaking countries or areas – Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Carricacou, Trinidad and Tobago, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands). As a component of the project, and in collaboration with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs will organize a workshop for all the representatives of public administration systems at the central and local government levels and civil society entities working in association with the public service of English- and Dutch-speaking multi-island States of the Caribbean. This workshop will outline and adopt an action plan to improve public management and networking between government and social partners and promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector; support human resource development and administrative reform in the Caribbean; and enhance training capabilities of Governments in the region. At the same time, the workshop will provide a good opportunity to formulate and present to the donor community an estimation of the technical, human and financial resources required to make the action plan operational. This project will be financed by a grant of

US$ 80,000 from the Government of Italy allocated through the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Notes

[1] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.